



H.R. 3957 – WATER USE EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION RESEARCH ACT

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 3957 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Jim Matheson (D-UT) on October 24, 2007. The House Committee on Science and Technology agreed to the bill, as amended, by voice vote on July 16, 2008.

H.R. 3957 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on July 30, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R. 3957 directs the Assistant Administrator for Research and Development of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish research and development program that promote water efficiency and conservation. This program includes research into technologies as well as storage and distribution systems aimed at promoting efficient water use.

A strategic research plan developed by the Assistant Administrator is to be submitted to the Science Advisory Board of the EPA for review and should be revised as necessary. The Assistant Administrator is also to facilitate the adoption of beneficial technologies and publication of information related to water conservation technologies.

Additionally, the legislation directs the Assistant Administrator to carry out and fund at least four projects in publicly accessible buildings (with at least one being residential and one being commercial) which will incorporate the latest water conservation technologies and designs. The Assistant Administrator is to report to Congress on the progress of these projects, development of the program, and implementation of the strategic research plan.

The Administrator of the EPA is directed to work with the National Academy of Sciences to complete a study to determine strategies for the management of water supplies, wastewater, and storm water. The study is also to include a comparison of water conservation research efforts in the U.S. compared to those of other countries. This report is to be submitted to Congress within two years of enactment.

The bill authorizes \$20 million dollars for each of fiscal years 2009 -2013.

BACKGROUND

There is currently no coordinated research effort conducted by the EPA for the development of water-use efficiency and conservation technologies. However, the EPA does sponsor a partnership program called WaterSense that promotes efficient water usage as well as the water-efficient products, programs, and practices. WaterSense partners with private industry to promote efficient technologies and best management practices such as efficient landscape irrigation design.

According to the EPA, only one percent of the water on the planet is available for human use. Today, Americans use an average of 100 gallons of water per person every day. At least 36 states are anticipating local, regional, or statewide water shortages by 2013. [EPA - WaterSense homepage](#)

COST

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that implementing H.R. 3957 would cost \$86 million over the 2009-2013 period and \$15 million after 2013. [Full CBO cost estimate for H.R. 3957](#)

STAFF CONTACT

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